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October 11, 1962 - Thursday

The Midlands Hotel is a Victorian edifice, occupying a whole city block. It is about to be threatened in importance by a new structure called the Piccadilly Hotel. There is a rash of building in and around Manchester, a city that already boasts a skyscraper higher than any in Britain, and only excelled by one in Europe.

Mrs. Curran, our Consul, picked me up this morning. I was [redacted] not surprised by her belief that the withdrawal of our Consulate here would be received with great disapproval. We went together to the Town Hall, where we were welcomed at the main entrance by the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress (Alderman Thomas and Mrs. Thomas). The Lord Mayor, as elsewhere in England, holds office for only one year, and is evidently delighted with his position. He referred to the fact that our Consulate had been first established in Manchester in 1825. He is the Leader of the Labour group on the City Council, having been a bus driver from 1924 to 1937, when he was appointed full-time Secretary of the Manchester passenger section of the Transport and General Workers' Union. He is gay, dignified, with a wonderful memory for faces, names, and the occupations of over 100 people whom he successively introduced to me. The huge Town Hall is a Victorian Gothic structure, with tremendous reception rooms. We were photographed downstairs and upstairs, even while having a drink in the Lord Mayor's office. At noon, we went in to meet the guests, who were seemingly representative of every facet of Manchester life. Amongst ~~others,~~ I met Captain Millard and Captain Rushworth of the Manchester Lines. I had occasion to refer to them in the course of my speech, which went more or less as follows:

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